

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE

Trade Adjustment Assistance was established under the Trade Act of 1974 (amended 1981, 1986, 1988, and 1993) to help American workers who have lost work as a result of increased imports. It is a federal program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and cooperating state employment security agencies.

Allowances and Special Assistance

Eligible workers receive Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) during periods of unemployment. The program also assists workers to regain satisfactory employment through the use of a full range of employment services and, if needed, provides classroom and/or on-the-job training, job search assistance, and relocation.

A basic claim is a fixed dollar amount payable within a 104-week benefit period that begins with the first week following the worker's most recent TRA-qualifying separation.

The weekly TRA rate is the same as for unemployment insurance (UI). The maximum TRA benefit is 52 times the weekly UI benefit amount minus the total amount of a worker's UI claim and any related extensions.

Workers approved for training may receive up to 26 additional weeks of allowances to complete the training. In no event may an individual receive more than 78 weeks of allowances.

Petitioning for Adjustment Assistance

A petition for adjustment assistance may be filed by any group of three or more workers of a firm or subdivision of a firm, their union, or their duly authorized representative, who feel that increased import competition has contributed significantly to the workers' unemployment. The group may petition the U.S. Department of Labor for a determination of eligibility to apply for adjustment assistance.

Workers may obtain a *Petition for Adjustment Assistance* (ETA 8560) by:

- Contacting any local Employment Development Department (EDD) Job Service office; or

- Calling the EDD claim filing office at 1-800-300-5616; or
- Downloading the petition form from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration Web site at www.wdsc.org/layoff/index.htm.

Certification

If the Department of Labor determines that trade import injury has occurred, it will issue a certification of eligibility to apply for adjustment assistance.

A certification is an official authorization by the Department of Labor for a specified group of workers to apply for adjustment assistance. The certification indicates the date that the group of workers becomes eligible to apply for adjustment assistance.

A worker who learns that his/her group has been certified must contact the local employment office (in California, the Employment Development Department) to apply for trade adjustment assistance. There it will be determined if the worker is covered by the certification, and whether basic qualifying requirements have been met.

Qualifying Requirements

The basic qualifying requirements are as follows:

- The worker must have been laid off for lack of work on or after the impact date and before the termination date of the certification.
- The worker must have had wages of \$30 or more in adversely affected employment in each of at least 26 of the previous 52 weeks, ending with the week of the worker's separation.

Affected workers who move to another state and then learn that former employees of their old company have been certified eligible to apply for adjustment assistance should immediately contact the nearest employment office to apply for adjustment assistance. That office will assist workers in filing an application for benefits.